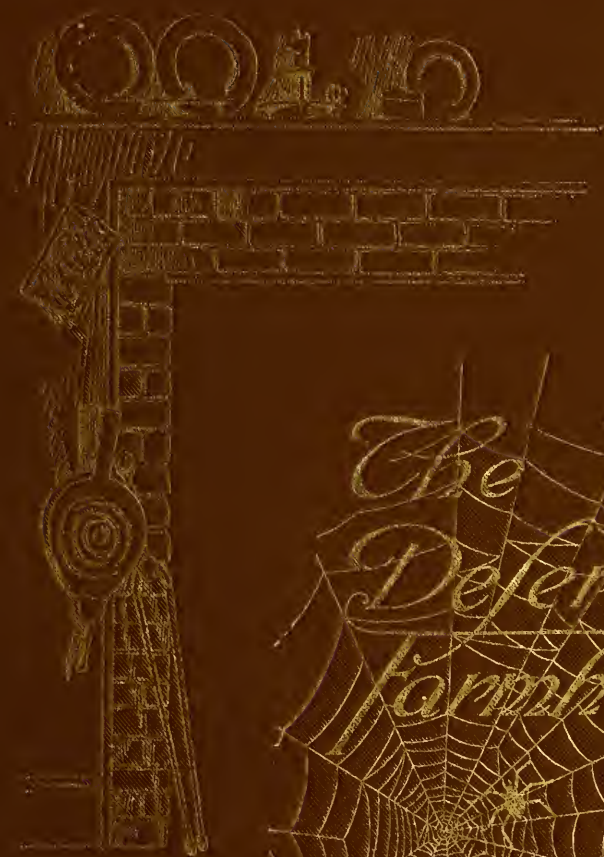




*The
Deserted
Farmhouse,
and
Other
Poems.
Lincoln*

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he Deserted Farm House

ILLUSTRATED

—AND—

Other Poems

"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance."—SHAKESPEARE

—BY—

✓
VARNUM LINCOLN

11

ANDOVER, MASS.
THE ANDOVER PRESS
1899

✓

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To Old Friends

Preface

*Tis sunset time ; how brief life's little day !
Around its scenes what hallowed memories throng !
And here I deign when fades its twilight ray,
To sing in varied keys my evening song,
As woodland thrush upon its leafy spray,
When hushed are other voices fields among,
And bird companions to their rest have gone,
Pours forth its notes in solemn dusk alone :*

*Or as one journeying to lands unknown,
Oft builds his fire to break the chill of night.
Departs, and other pilgrims passing on
Raking its embers, find both warmth and light ;
So do I here, now shadows cool are grown,
Kindle my torch with fancies dull or bright,
Which dropped, may from its ashes still impart,
Perchance some joy, to cheer a weary heart.*

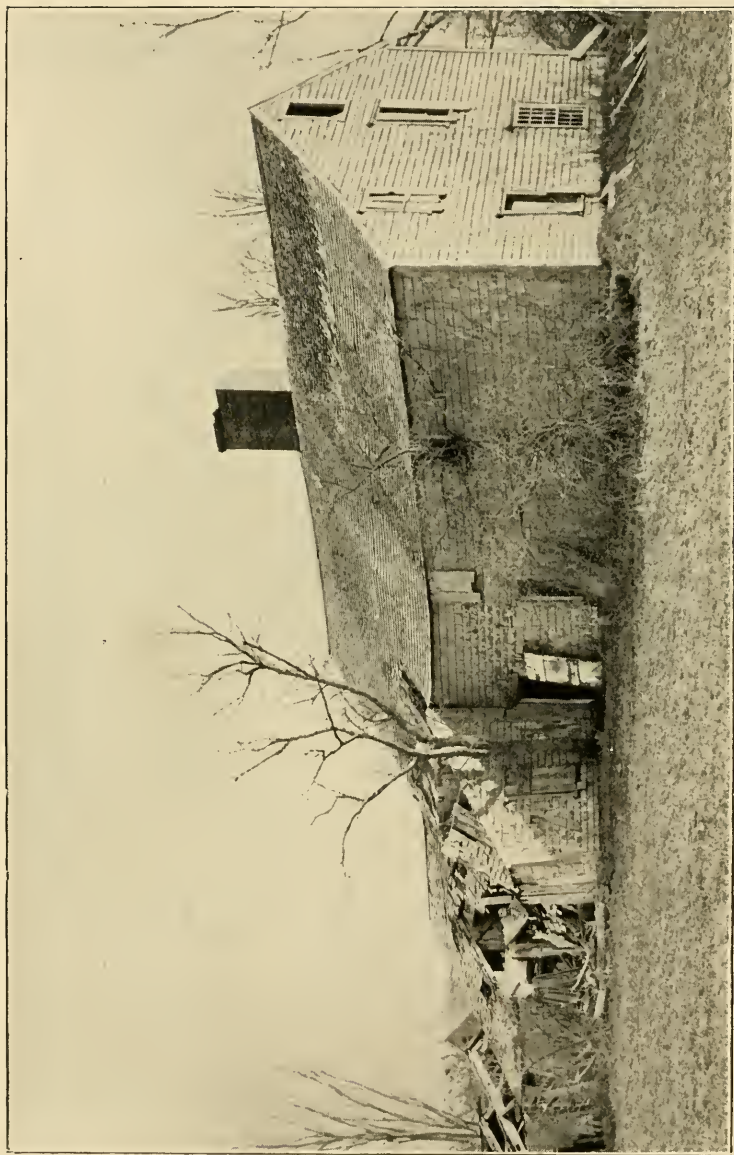
*This evening hour though clothed in sombre hue,
Its compensation brings, its hopes, its dreams ;
Gone noontide heat ; and twilight's gentle dew
Of peace upon the spirit falling, seems
A cooling balm imparting life anew ;
While far above the dim horizon, gleams
The golden sky, from which the wayworn borrow,
Hopes of a day more beautiful to-morrow !*

THE AUTHOR.

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The Deserted Farm House



"Its crumbling walls now desolate and bare"

The Deserted Farm House

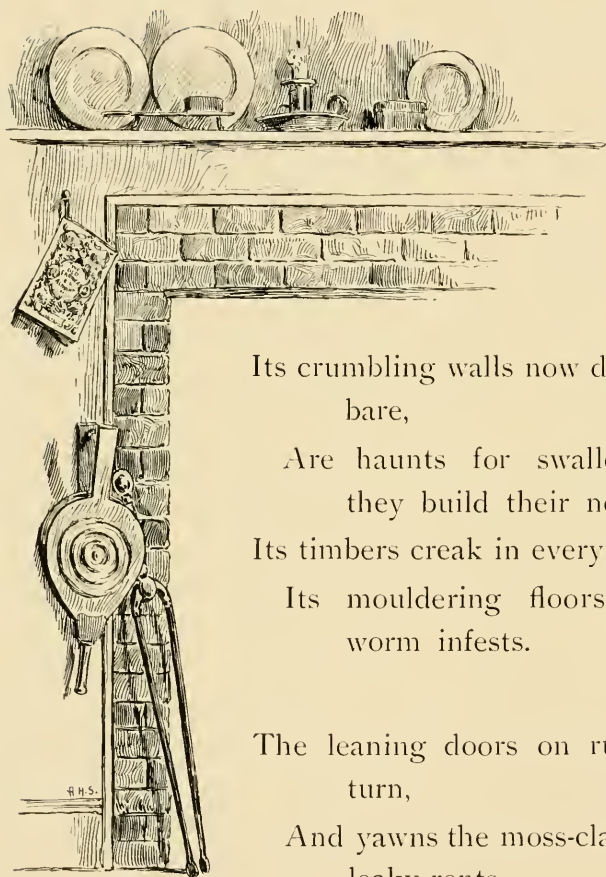


ON rambling road in quaint back country town,
Remote from noise of travel and of trade,
A weather-beaten farm-house grey and lone
Deserted stands, beneath an elm tree's shade.

Long time ago in old Colonial days,
Where settler's axe had smoothed the forest ground,
A mansion fair to tempt the passing gaze
Arose, among the distant hamlets 'round.

But Time soon wastes once dear and hallowed scenes,
And rural home with lapse of years decays,
And long forsaken, grim, and tottering leans,
A relic sad of old and bygone days.

The Deserted Farm House



Its crumbling walls now desolate and
bare,

Are haunts for swallows where
they build their nests,

Its timbers creak in every gust of air,

Its mouldering floors the busy
worm infests.

The leaning doors on rusty hinges
turn,

And yawns the moss-clad roof with
leaky rents,

E'en hungry mice its dusty cupboards spurn ;

On broken stairways spiders pitch their tents.

The Deserted Farm House

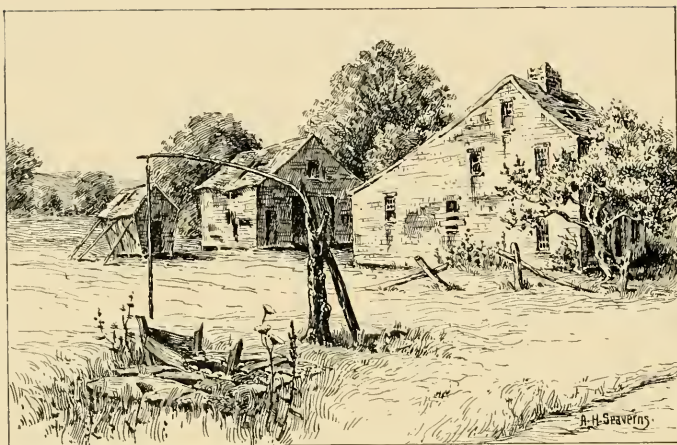
At night the owl oft sits on hearthstone cold,
And woos its distant mate with plaintive calls,
While circling bats their secret revels hold,
Where ghostly moonlight on the wainscot falls.

O'er rotting sill rank weeds their shadows spread,
As if to hide it from the curious gaze,
While the lone lilac by the ruined shed,
Forsaken droops amid the tangled maze.

By ragged fence the untilled garden lies,
On larkspur beds the deadly nightshade grows,
Where blazed the cockscomb knotted brambles rise,
The red sumac where bloomed the blushing rose.

And scattered trees where once had orchard been,
The fitting types of frail and withered age,
Whose work is done, yet linger on the scene,
To pity move, or sober thought engage.

The Deserted Farm House



A broken well-sweep dangles in the air,
And marks the spot where dripping mosses grew,
And sunken stones, the spotted adder's lair,
And fallen curb, complete the dismal view.

O'er all the scene a solemn stillness broods,
Alone disturbed by caw of distant crow,
Or partridge drumming in the neighboring woods,
Or cry of loon in lonely marsh below.

The Deserted farm House

The tattered vagrant shuns the gruesome place ;
The whistling boy though loud his courage boasts,
When moans the dreary wind with quickened pace
All trembling flees, from fear of haunting ghosts.

Yet here the sunburnt ploughman once was seen,
Here dwelt his race to noble toil inured,
His bleating flocks here led to hillsides green,
And fertile acres tilled by wealth allured.



The rustic swain here wooed his milkmaid bride
Mid humble scenes and lowly lot ; yet found

The Deserted Farm House

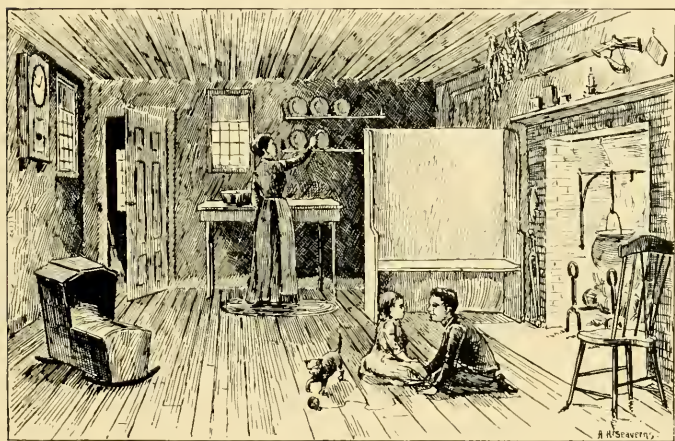
Where wedded hearts in sacred love abide,
Each place a home, each spot enchanted ground.
And rooms now silent echoed years ago
To playful games, and noise of bubbling glee
From prattling childhood, who in mimic show
Rode grandsire's cane, and clambered on his knee.



The kitchen old with widespread chimney place,
Was long the housewife's fair and proud domain,
Where shining pans and andirons polished face,
Her gentle skill proclaimed, her useful reign.

The Deserted farm House

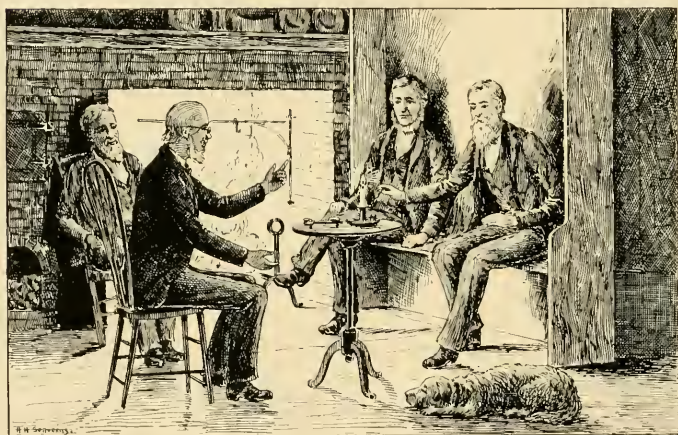
O'er mantel hung the farmer's frequent guide,
The almanac ; whose leaves he searched to know
Eclipses, change of moon, and courts, and tide,
To journey when, or plant, when rain or snow.



With beaming face the clock surveyed the scene,
The antique chair and settle graced the room,
Along the shelves bright pewter platters lean,
The door aslant displayed the hemlock broom.

The Deserted Farm House

The room though scant had always space to spare,
With welcome warm, for stranger, friend, or guest,
Their simple life, their plodding toil and care,
Keen relish gave to social cheer and jest.

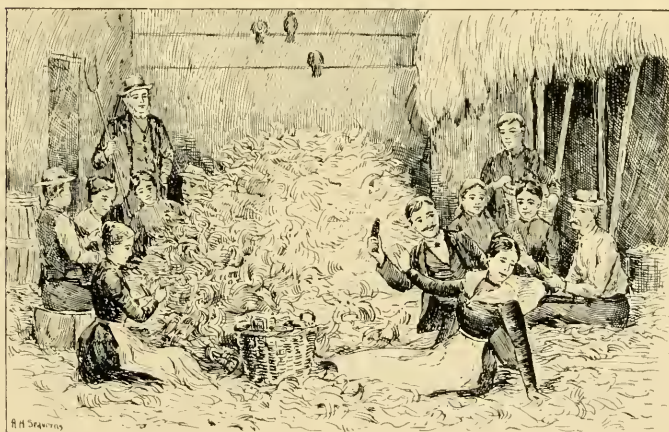


Old neighbors met around the crackling fire,
To hear the news, repeat the tales of yore,
Of weather talk, and crops; with fresh desire
Grave themes discuss they settled times before.

The Deserted Farm House

A brighter glow when winter evenings came,
Upon the hearthstone shone, and higher rose
From hissing logs the pyramid of flame,
Till in its beams each face transfigured grows.

The snowbound trav'ler sees the ruddy light,
And seeks a shelter from the blustering storm,
With marvels strange beguiles the hours of night,
And shares, 'neath friendly roof the fireside warm.



The Deserted farm House

Each season brought some glad event to please
These plain and hardy tenants of the soil ;
With huskings, quiltings, and quaint paring-bees,
They wisely mingled pleasure with their toil.



And sleighbells jingled on the frosty air,
As gathered from the neighborhood around,
The sturdy youths and red-cheeked damsels fair,
Who made with plays and jests the walls resound.

The Deserted Farm House

With blindman's buff the rafters rang, or plate
Was whirled, and forfeits paid with rustic grace,

The coy maid yielding
calmly to her fate,
The boist'rous kiss re-
ceived with blush-
ing face.



And here the thrifty dame
or buxom lass,
By noisy cockcrow
roused, oft led the
dawn

In eager haste ; brushed
dewdrops from the
grass

With foaming pail, ere
blushed the cheek
of morn.

With busy hands she still her task pursued
In dairy neat ; in shining rows arrayed,

The Deserted farm House

Huge pans of milk like giant lilies stood :
On snow white bench the frugal meal she laid.

Around the board both youth and age are seen
To share their porridge or their bannock cake,
And grateful that with health and hunger keen,
On simple fare a royal feast could make.



With dextrous hand she
twirls the cunning
wheel,

As through her fin-
gers runs the fleecy
thread,

Whose hum like bees
when they sweet
laden steal

On scented wings,
above some flowery
bed.

The Deserted Farm House

The evening hour its
fitting labor brings,
When she by clean
swept hearth her
needle plies,
While on the crane the
steaming kettle
sings,
And at her feet the
drowsy watch-dog
lies.



In scenes like these she spends each passing day,
Content in her appointed sphere and lot,
The task divine where love inspires the way,
And sweet the toil in pure devotion wrought.

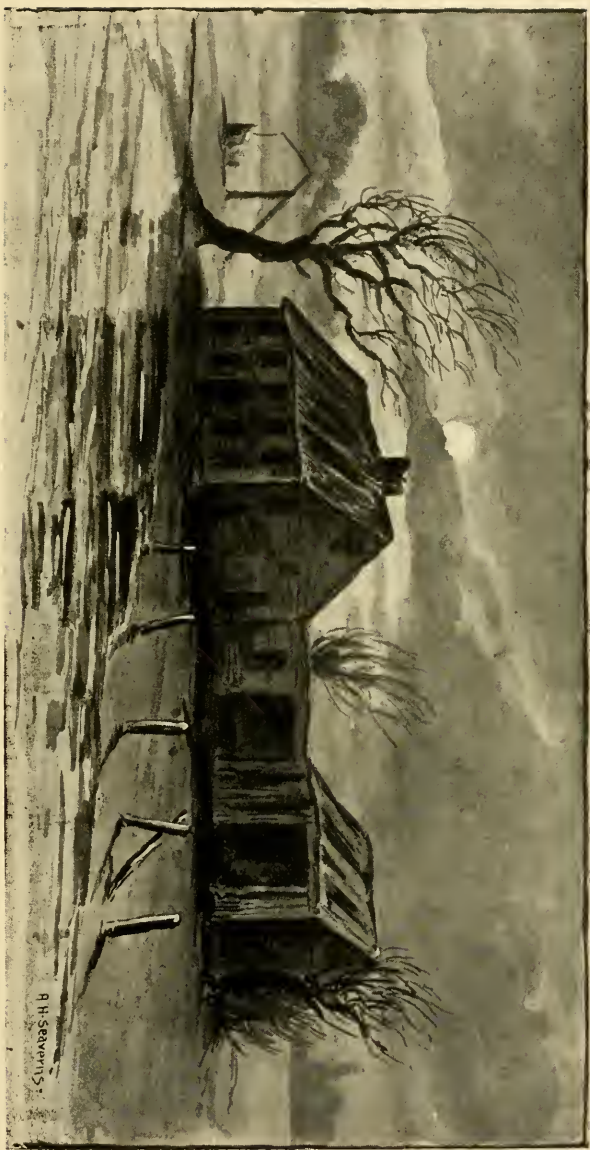
The Deserted farm House

In search of bliss though others far may roam,
For transient fame to public walks aspire,
She finds her joy within the realm of home,
And reigns a queen beside the household fire.

If souls unburdened linger near these shores,
And to old haunts return in earthly spheres,
Then forms unseen may tread again these floors,
And greet the loved of long departed years,

And view the scenes once dear to mem'ries old,
And tales rehearse, or muse with fond desire
O'er days of happy youth, or age when cold
The blood, they dozed beside the blazing fire.

Ah! we know not; yet when the spectral light
Of moon's soft beams, floods the dark'ning gloom
Of these deserted rooms, at noon of night,
The time when shrouded dead are said to roam;



"The spectral light of moon's soft beams floods the dark'ning gloom"

The Deserted Farm House

And on the staircase trembling shadows fall
From waving elm that bends above the eaves,
And shapes fantastic spread each mouldering wall,
From which pale fright full many a bugbear weaves ;

Tis then our fears invite the ills we dread,
And sight disordered sees what fancy dreams,
A whispering breeze will then invoke the dead,
The moon's pale glimpse, a weird hobgoblin seems.

And where more fit for gloomy ghosts to meet,
Than 'mong the scenes of old forsaken place ?
At midnight hour where lonesome more complete,
Or timid sense more weird-like objects trace ?

Then ghosts, if such there be, may linger here,
To view the ground where once their feet had strayed,
Some old companion seek, or drop a tear
O'er change and wreck that fleeting years have made.

The Deserted farm House

Alas! no answer comes to eye or ear,
Through all the house decay and silence reign,
Hushed all the busy life, the fireside cheer,
Nor voices heard of spectres, nor of men.

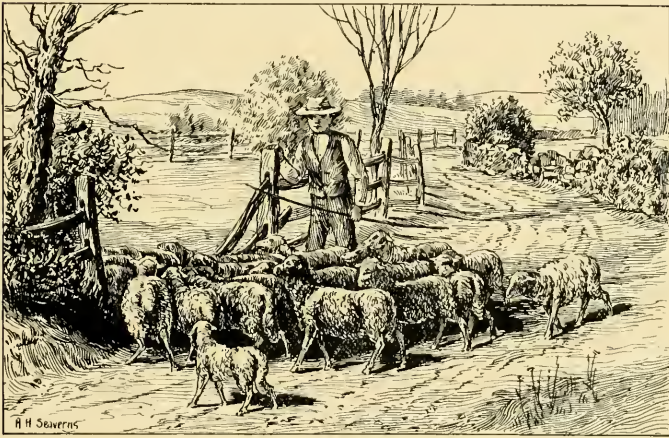
The toiling husbandman is seen no more,
Nor drives again his herds to upland glade,
Nor walks the woodland path; nor by the door
He sits, when twilight shadows lingering fade.



The noonday horn calls him
no more from
field,
No more he turns with
plough the rugged
ground,
Nor sickle thrusts where
golden harvests
yield,
Nor by the lane, nor in
the garden found.

The Deserted farm House

His name no chisel writes on marble scroll,
No listening crowds his worthy acts applaud,
Yet as the needle steady to the pole,
So true was he to conscience and his God.



Not versed in schools nor learned in hostile creeds,
Nor taught the path of circling worlds to trace,
The way to Heaven he knew ; and showed by deeds
He best loved God when best he served his race.

The Deserted Farm House

Let not vain pomp their homespun garb deride,
Nor scornful speech their simple nature wound,
Rough mountains often golden treasures hide,
In vales obscure are glittering diamonds found.

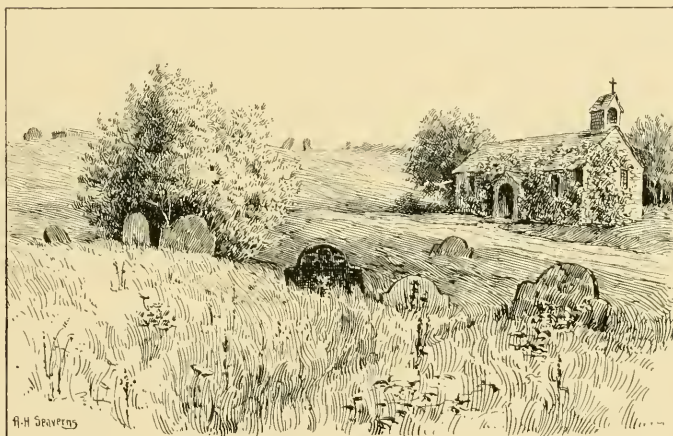
What though their deeds fill no historic page,
Nor sculptured stones rise o'er their sleeping dust,
Their names unknown far down the distant age,
Who fell on field or served ambition's lust?

At last the granite crumbles to the ground,
And fame decays achieved in sordid strife,
But virtue lives, and though with humblest found,
In widening circles spreads from life to life.

In peace they lived with homely joys content,
Not slaves to fawning pride nor fashions new,
In neighbor's need their service kindly lent,
In want were rich because their wants were few.

The Deserted Farm House

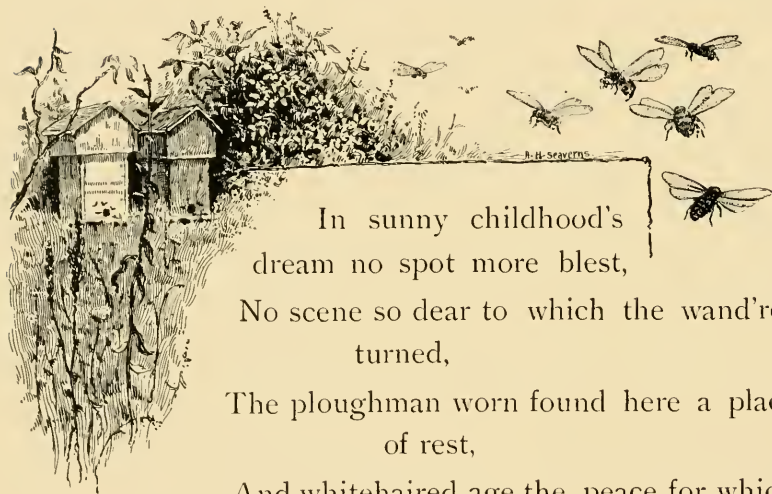
But o'er the threshold which their feet have worn,
In mourning robes the slow procession treads,
And one by one their mortal forms are borne,
In solemn silence to their dusty beds.



Deserted long this moss-crowned ruin stands,
And rough winds whistle through its crannied walls,
A mark by day for rude, destructive hands,
By night a spectre which the heart appalls.

The Deserted Farm House

Yet no ancestral hall nor gilded dome,
In grandeur could with this plain house compare,
When years ago it bore the name of home,
And mem'ries tender long have clustered there.



In sunny childhood's
dream no spot more blest,
No scene so dear to which the wand'rer
turned,
The ploughman worn found here a place
of rest,
And whitehaired age the peace for which
it yearned.

But now no fires upon the hearthstone burn,
No feet to music trip the sanded floor,
No housewife waits from field her spouse' return,
No honest poor with blessing leaves the door.

The Deserted farm House

Not one, indeed, remains to mourn its fate,
No voice to tell its long and varied tale,
Nor annals known of either name or date,
O'er all oblivion draws its sombre veil.

What more the fame man seeks his name to crown,
And builds with anxious care on mortal shore,
Which as the rushing tide of time sweeps on,
Is lost beneath its waves and seen no more ?

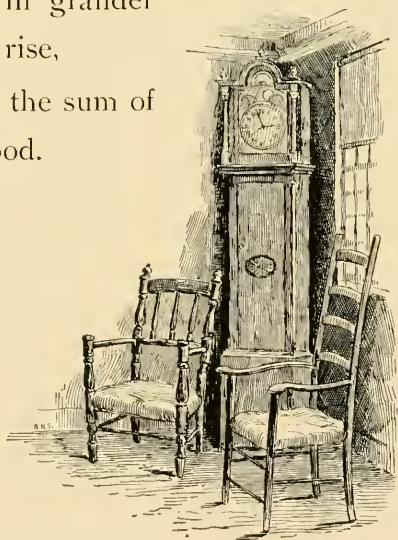
And who, alas ! will keep our memory green,
Or care in distant generations hence,
That we have ever lived, or loved, or been,
Who long have slept beneath our grassy tents ?

And yet if like some wayside tenement,
We have a covert served from cold or rain
To any heart ; or cheer in darkness lent
To some belated wand'rer ; life is gain.

The Deserted Farm House

Some soul, perchance, disconsolate and lone,
By sin betrayed or plunged in sorrow's night,
Beholds the clear beams from our candle thrown,
Fresh courage takes and turns to God and light.

No act is lost, though name forgotten dies,
In Time's long years and strange vicissitude,
Each noble deed in grander
forms shall rise,
And larger grow the sum of
human good.



The Brook

O little brook ! playmate in youthful days,
And still dear memories around thee cling ;
Almost thou art human in thy ways,
For I have heard thy merry laughter ring,
And seen thee dance on crystal stairs, and gaze
With sparkling eyes, as if some living thing ;
And my deep love thou didst return, I know,
For my face I've seen in thy heart below.

I loved thy waters ; on thy brimming tide
Sailed many a ship to seas far away,
Which ne'er returned : some were wrecks scattered wide,
As have other barks, I launched since that day

The Brook

On Time's swift stream, in my deep joy and pride,
 Freighted with dear hopes, treasures rich and gay;
But, alas! went down with their white sails spread,
Into darkness and silence, shattered, dead.

Thou art beautiful as a young bride dressed
 For marriage altar. White beads on thy brow,
A chain of jewels sparkles on thy breast
 In the clear sun. Flowers of every hue glow
In rich beauty on thy emerald vest.

When thou dost pass, the willows bending low
Kiss thy moist lips; and bright buttercups swing
Their golden censers,—incense to thee bring.

I loved thy murmuring music when a child,
 Whether thy silvery tones rang smooth and clear
On air of summer days, or loud and wild
 At springtime flood; and e'en now the dull ear

The Brook

Of trembling age is soothed by accents mild
That come from rippling songs each day I hear ;
And many a time when by cares oppressed,
Thou hast solace brought to a weary breast.

Happy brook ! for thou dost sing all day long ;
And when gloom folds o'er earth its leaden wing,
And the spirit of dreams walks unseen among
Weary ones, thou seemst to strike a louder string :
From thee I learn that when sad troubles throng
And dark night broods o'er heart, it still may sing.
With soul tuned to harmonies infinite,
Shadows with beauty shine ; there is no night.

Like every good man's life whose hidden source
Is in unfailing springs from heights above
Spreading delight on its way, so thy course
Is radiant with joy where thou dost move ;

The Brook

Fresh flowers and verdure start by silent force

From thee, enriching fields and umbrageous grove ;
All scenes of nature shine with richer glow,
And fruitful harvests smile where thou dost flow.

In thy calm moods, blue skies and shining scroll

Of night's starry constellations in thee
Are mirrored, as heaven in the good man's soul.

Whose peace grows wider as it nears the sea,
And reaching at last its immortal goal,

Finds life the same in grander destiny ;
Its joy on earth with larger heaven blends,
As the peaceful brook in vast ocean ends!

Age Hath its Joys

Why should we grieve that youth has fled,
And golden locks are turned to gray;
That wrinkles show how years have sped
Since we were careless boys at play?

Why mourn the loss of rosy dreams,
That painted life with hues so fair;
Of joys as brief as summer streams,
Of castles perished, built in air?

Is not the sun as bright today
As when it shone on hours long gone,
The skies as blue, the stars same ray,
As when life flowed a constant song?

Age Hath its Joys

Are not the chants of birds as sweet,
And flowers as gay in shady nooks,
As when we climbed with bare, brown feet,
Each hillside green, and fished the brooks?

Age hath its joys not less than youth,
That spring from fountains broad and clear,
From wisdom gained, and blessed truth,
Calm thoughts, sweet hopes, memories dear!

Brooks dash and sparkle at young springtide,
But soon anon they cease to be;
Rivers make channels deep and wide,
E'en while they bear us out to sea.

Who cares for wine from vintage new?
'Tis age that gives the viol tone;
What painter's art excels the view,
Of lingering light, at set of sun?

Age Hath its Joys

Man a frail leaf, indeed, may seem,
That from life's stem frost soon denudes,
Yet where do scenes with beauty beam,
As those who meet in Autumn woods?

What builder, moved with wise intent,
Frames works of art for gods to see,
Of texture strong or ornament,
Seeks timber from a sapling tree?

The truth is clear, and God is good,
All seasons have their fitting joys,
Blessings mark each passing mood,
All things at last show equal poise.

Yet harp unstrung no music gives,
No blind can see the sights of June,
And hearts, to taste the good that lives,
Must first with love be found in tune.

Hold Thou My Hand

Hold Thou my hand, dear Lord ; rough is the way,
Leading through deep ravines, up mountains steep,
O'erhung with mists and clouds, where not a ray
Of sunlight falls ; but where deep calls to deep,
And all around, below, and overhead,
Is naught but gloom, where I alone must tread.

Hold Thou my hand.

Slipp'ry the path, and mortal sense is weak,
Temptation charms and sings its siren song,
Enticing voices in soft accents speak
Of sweet joys found, and gains in ways of wrong ;

Hold Thou My Hand

List'ning I slide into sin's deep abyss,
Where broods a living death and serpents hiss.

Hold Thou my hand.

Upon my heart I bear grief's heavy load,
And falter as I feel my way in tears
Along the windings of my pilgrim road
With sad'ning memories of bygone years :
Upon whom can I lean, O Lord, but Thee,
In life's deep sorrows and strange mystery ?

Hold Thou my hand.

I pray for truth, and seek from books and creeds
Some gleam to cheer my soul with strength and hope,
But all in vain ; e'en in my saddest needs
And sharpest pangs I still in darkness grope ;
These human tapers make but feeble light,
My dearest hopes are mocked and end in night.

Hold Thou my hand.

Hold Thou My Hand

Life's day at last will close and evening come,
The songs of birds be hushed, and shadows creep,
In the calm twilight hour, o'er earth and home,
And I shall to slumber go, long and deep,
And to dear faces that have made so bright
This weary world, shall say my last good night!

Hold Thou my hand.



The True Advent



longing wait as one of old,

The great Messiah's promised birth,
I dream as Hebrew prophets told,
Of Him who should redeem the earth.

But not in outward form or place,
Not in some spot of ancient fame,
Do I expect to greet his face,
Or kneel in homage to his name.

In soul upright, in contrite heart,
In life that conscience ne'er condemns,
In love that heals a neighbor's smart,
These are our sacred Bethlehems.

The True Advent

In better laws, in sweeter homes,
In grander hopes that conquer death,
There he, a living spirit, comes,
The Holy One of Nazareth.

There brightly gleams the guiding star,
There angels chant their holy songs,
As they descend from gates ajar,
A multitude in shining throngs.

There shall I best his presence see,
There bend the ear to hear again
Sweet strains of heavenly melody,
“Peace on earth, good will to men.”

By these, I know my Lord is born,
In them behold his face divine,
I need not wait some hallowed morn,
Nor manger seek in Palestine.

Just Over the River



THE night's coming on and the air grows chill,
And weary with travel soon shall I stand,
By the banks of a river dark and still,
Where the ferryman waits with oar in hand,
To bear me on to the beautiful shore,
Where the loved and the lost are gone before,
Just over the river.

Just over the river, it is not far
Beyond the grey mists where the palm-groves lie,
And sunny isles lift above the dim bar ;
Though lonely the voyage One Friend is nigh,
Who knows all the way to cheer and to guide,
As o'er the dark wave we silently glide,
Just over the river.

Just Over the River

Just over the river, the dream how fair,
Of evergreen fields and realms of the blest,
Where music celestial floats on the air,
And souls of the weary eternally rest;
Where sickness ne'er comes, nor mourner's sad tears,
Nor storm-clouded skies, nor passing of years,
Just over the river.

Just over the river, where falls no night,
Nor darkness of sin its glory to mar,
But holiness reigns and God is the light,
And bright shining gates stand always ajar;
Where no hunger nor thirst ever are known,
And waters of life flow fast by the throne,
Just over the river.

Just over the river, why should I fear?
Many a loved one has crossed o'er the tide,
And in my day-dreams their voices I hear,
In visions of night I walk by their side;

Just Over the River

What rapture to see their faces once more,
And clasp hands again on the radiant shore,
Just over the river.

Just over the river, ah, shall I know
The dear ones of earth long vanished from sight!
Shall I see them as in days long ago,
And share forever new scenes of delight?
Oh! lonely and sad mid golden paved streets,
If there wandering, the heart no loved one meets!
Just over the river.

Just over the river, what joy 'twill be,
When harbor is made and the white sails furled;
Then solved the sad doubts of life's mystery,
In the light of a glad immortal world;
Where life in God to larger fullness grows,
No evils blight, no silent river flows!
Just over the river.

The Little Red Schoolhouse



tread once more the same old scene,
The unchanged hills still I view,
The winding brook, the vale between,
O'er all there bends same sky of blue.

The quiet fields again I greet,
The dim old woods where snares we laid,
The mill pond where our mimic fleet
We sailed, and happy voyages made.

The little schoolhouse painted red,
With rough stone steps beside the sill,
Where we at noon our tables spread,
I see through mist mine eyelids fill.

The Little Red Schoolhouse

At the corner where two roads meet,
There in the sunshine still it stands,
Same straggling wall, and rustic seat,
Where children grouped in merry bands.

I hear again their noisy glee,
I join once more their sports and plays,
And o'er the chords of memory,
Sweep tender thoughts of boyhood days.

But where are now those old schoolmates,
With whom I conned my lessons o'er,
To learn a task of rules and dates,
Or stand as culprits on the floor?

With whom I shared youth's simple joys,
And careless dreamed of naught but play;
The gentle girls, the laughing boys,
Who filled those seats, where now are they?

The Little Red Schoolhouse

Where one who early stirred to love
My boyish heart, and whom to win
I gave brightest flowers from the grove,
The reddest apples of the bin ?

Where he with stern and solemn face,
Who held in awe that roguish band,
Stilled the noise, checked the rude grimace,
With oaken ferule in his hand ?

Yet had a kind and sunny side,
And those intent to pluck the tree
Of knowledge, found in him a guide
From Alphabet to Rule of Three.

I see the children rushing out,
I hear as in long years ago,
The music of their joyous shout,
I look ; alas ! not one I know.

The Little Red Schoolhouse

Silent and swift time's current flows,
Friends are borne on its drifting tide,
Their sails bright gleam a moment shows,
The breath of fate soon scatters them wide.

Far remote have fallen their lines,
That ne'er on earth shall cross again,
Yet memory their form enshrines
Their virtues in the heart remain.

Though I've gazed on marvels of art,
Scenes of beauty by land and sea,
Few so fair or dear to my heart
O little red schoolhouse as thee.

Symbol of light, long may it stand,
To guard and keep with sacred care,
The holy altars of our land,
Heritage born of blood and prayer.

No More



E crossed one day the solemn sea,

With silent oar and boatman pale,

Still by those tides of mystery,

We watch and wait a coming sail.

With weary eyes in calm or storm,

We pierce the cloud-mist of those shores,

Yet catch no glimpse of vanished form,

Nor hear the sound of dripping oars.

O cruel fate! O change and loss!

That brings such sense of grief and pain,

The burden of a heavy cross,

Nor is the world the same again.

No More

Days come and go in faultless round,
 Their starry tale dark nights repeat,
But vain we wait the cheerful sound,
 On threshold worn of coming feet.

His face we missed in June's sweet bloom,
 From earth's fair scenes he made more fair,
And when again the roses come,
 We look, alas! he is not there.

Bright winged swallows again return,
 And build their nests above the door,
But aching hearts are left to mourn,
 The loss of one who comes no more.

Borne up to heaven, the morning dew
 Returns again to bless the flower,
Yet the old walks his presence knew,
 And verdant fields will know no more.

No More

No more among our household band,
 No more from lips his earnest thought,
No more the pressure of his hand,
 No more the cheer his presence brought.

There is no gloom like heart's eclipse,
 It colors life with darkest dyes,
O'er earth a sense of coldness creeps,
 On every scene a shadow lies.

O sad and throbbing heart be still!
 And count a Father's mercies o'er,
Wait the unfolding of His will,
 Nor doubt His goodness yet in store.

His heart is love ; He knows our own,
 And he will make His purpose plain,
Then joy complete His work shall crown,
 And parted souls clasp hands again.

Those Wrinkled Hands



HOSE wrinkled hands that o'er a woman's breast
Now folded lie in death's last solemn sleep,
Alas ! how cold and still ; but God knows best ;
While we with saddened hearts in silence weep,
Who had by those dear hands been often blest ;
But now shall miss the love that flowed so deep :
No more shall we enjoy their soft caress,
Nor feel again their clinging tenderness.

In these rough lines where Time's swift plough has run,
And heaped with furrows deep the trace of years,
The marks of toil, the change of shade and sun,
The record of a busy life appears :
Full many a tale they tell of joys begun,
And hopes soon ended in a dash of tears !
These veins of blue her sunny skies disclose,
That skin so fair a white-robed angel shows.

Those Wrinkled Hands

But lo, as we read on what sight is this?
A cherub form with dimpled hands and small,
Bright golden locks and lips that tempt a kiss,
Like paintings seen on old cathedral wall,
Or angel sent from distant world of bliss,
That sunshine brings to this dim earthly ball:
Again we look, a laughing girl is seen,
To school she skips or romps in orchards green.

Next in these lines with sibyl eye we trace,
The vision of a maiden sweet and fair;
By garden gate she waits, upon her face
A crimson blush, as if had gathered there
The rosy hues of many a morning's grace;
Or is that glow of bliss beyond compare,
Aught else than love's warm thrill as there she stands,
Clasped in her own another's tender hands?

Those Wrinkled Hands

In these quaint hieroglyphs again are shown
'Neath sheltering trees, a home and cottage neat,
And children round the ancient fireside grown,
And hands that weary toiled to guide their feet
In pleasant paths ; and burdens borne alone
Through years, that others' joy might be complete ;
Forgive, dear soul, when in life's lamp did burn
So clear thy love, so thoughtless our return !

Life's busy noon unrolls ; and what befell
In sober age, how hands now pale and cold
Were moved to kindly acts ; oft strove to quell
A neighbor's grief ; and wipe the gathering mould
Of death from aching brows ; sick-beds can tell,
And poor their saintly deeds with joy unfold :
Then rest, sweet hands, with scars of battle won,
Like folded banners when the day is done !

The Miracle of Love



LOW sinks the sun on Tabor's hill,
Far spent is evening's golden light,
The waves of Galilee lie still,
Cool shadows deepen into night.

From city home and village hut,
The people crowd the desert drear,
Seeking strange signs of him who taught
Truths never dreamed by prophet seer.

The Lord in love the throng surveyed ;
He blest and brake the scanty store,
When lo ! 'twas found the few loaves made
A meal for all, and baskets more.

The Miracle of Love

In finer sense, when love its feast
Has spread, although its joys we share
With thousands more, still find increased
Our own, in measures large and rare.

O wondrous love ! O power divine !
By thee are marvels daily wrought,
That Eastern Magi can ne'er outshine,
Nor famous stone poor mortals sought.

No richer boon can man possess ;
The dross of life it turns to gold ;
Although such wealth and power to bless,
It can be neither bought nor sold.

When will, indeed, its wonders end,
That more we have when more we use,
That richer grow when most we spend,
And what we keep we always lose ?

The Miracle of Love

Hard is the fare, the cabin small,
But heart o'erflows to God and man,
The cot blooms out a palace hall,
The humble board a festal scene.

And every lot is brighter made ;
To poorest crumb is sweetness given ;
Large usury by love is paid,—
Our gifts though small, our gains a heaven.



My House



house I have where snug I dwell,
On the verge of two worlds it stands ;
The Builder's art no tongue can tell,
And never landlord rent demands ;
Aback, the land of silence lies,
In front, a realm of mysteries.

No temple half so quaint is seen,
With crimson walls and shape erect,
And chambers built for gods or men,
By hands of unseen architect ;
Dome, windows, groin and pediment,
All show its Maker's wise intent.

My House

Through change of sunshine and of rain,
Under its roof have I lived on,
An heir by nature of rich domain,
Lord of a castle all my own,
With grandest servants day and night,
The earth, bright suns, and starry light.

Its silent rooms with pictures throng,
Of friends and scenes in bygone years,
Many a face though vanished long,
A portrait on its walls appears ;
The loved though lost to sense and sight,
Are here revealed in hallowed light.

Though house alone I occupy,
I live no gloomy anchorite,
But often have grand company,
Whose talk beguiles the lonely night;

My House

Great Plato puts his hand in mine,
And Shakespeare sweeps his lyre again.

But now there falls the winter's snow,
And o'er the windows creeps a frost,
On the red hearth the fire burns low,
Chill is the air, and many a ghost
Haunts its dim halls, of years long dead,
Alas ! of joys forever fled.

Yet sweet the thought when house grows old,
Its timbers trembling to decay,
When lights are out and hearthstone cold,
And tender tones have died away,
A mansion sure its tenant waits,
Where outward swing the shining gates.

Ring Out, O Bells



ING out, O bells, the joyful sound,
Thy tuneful tongues the story tell,
To all the people world around,
What in Bethlehem town befell.

How in centuries long ago,
When prophet lips were cold and still,
Men blindly groped in sin and woe,
And light burned dim on Zion's hill.

The midnight breezes whispered low,
By Kedron's brook the shadows slept,
And Hebrew shepherds 'neath the glow
Of starry skies, lone vigils kept.

Ring Out, O Bells

And as they watched their flocks by night,
They dreamed what seer and bard had told
Of him who should oppression smite,
And bless their nation as of old.

Long they waited; yet to redeem
Israel, no glad Messiah came;
So slow the years of God did seem,
That hearts grew faint with grief and shame.

When lo! that night, before them stood,
One who in glistening raiment shone,
Saying, "I bring thee tidings good,
To-day a Savior, King, is born!"

The gates of Heaven flew open wide,
And downward rushed in joyous mood,
Borne on music's melodious tide,
The heavenly host, a multitude.

Ring Out, O Bells

Glory to God on high they sang,
Peace on earth, good will to men,
While Syrian skies with raptures rang,
And angels smote their harps again.

Then ring, O bells, and join the strains
Of angel choirs, who came to earth,
And anthems sang o'er Judah's plains,
To celebrate a Savior's birth.

And let all tongues their tribute bring
Of praise, for such a day divine,
For precious hopes that round it cling,
For tidings glad in Palestine.

And hasten, Lord, that brighter morn,
When love through all the world shall reign,
When Christ in every heart is born,
And Heaven comes down to earth again !

The Invitation

[REV. 3-20.]



COME sup with me, dear Lord, I pray,
Now darkly fall the evening shades,
Far spent the sun its noontide ray,
And twilight in the valley fades.

I lift the latch thy face to greet,
The door I swing with welcome wide ;
Here stay and rest thy weary feet,
And lay thy pilgrim staff aside.

Though I a costly feast prepare,
And viands rich on table spread,
Yet small these gifts with thine compare,
When thou thyself the Living Bread !

The Invitation

Abide with me a constant guest,
And make my dwelling wholly thine ;
My contrite heart thy place of rest,
My spirit pure thy throne divine.

Well might I shrink to entertain
A King like thee with scanty fair,
But then I know that board so plain,
Is banquet rich if thou art there.

What friend like thee in lonely night,
For thee what store can I provide,
Since thou dost bring both food and light,
And glory fills the household wide ?

Thy presence brightens every spot,
Thy love adorns each barren way ;
I live in state in lowest cot,
With thee my guest, and night is day !

The Man of Sorrows

WITH creatures dumb his place of birth,
A stable crib his infant bed,
Rejected and despised of earth,
At last upon the cross he bled.

On him were laid the griefs of all,
He marked their tears, he heard their moan,
His heart of love obeyed the call,
In others' woes, forgot his own.

A homeless wanderer, he trod
The rugged ways of field and town,
And dared for righteousness and God,
The clannish hate, the bigot's frown.

The Man of Sorrows

To poverty and trials born,
A life forlorn and meek he led,
When hungry, plucked the waving corn,
And had not where to lay his head.

At night he sought the mountains bare,
Or fisher's boat beside the sea,
Or peasant poor their lot to share,
Where washed the waves of Galilee.

With mourners grouped beside the tomb,
Where in cold death a brother slept,
Midst shadows of a darkened home,
His grief found tears with those who wept.

Yet from the tears on earth he shed,
There blooms a beauty more complete,
And by his sighs and sorrows dread,
The psalm of life is made more sweet.

The Man of Sorrows

Ah! why should we too oft forget,
That he for us these sorrows bore ;
Why cares of sense our lives beset,
And cut the wings by which we soar ?

O heart of God, so infinite,
Grant all of love a larger share,
That floods the world with joy and light,
And shows his life reflected there !



Angels at the Tomb

WHILE yet 'twas dark in Eastern sky,
Nor dawn with crimson lips had kissed
The sacred towers on Sion high,
Nor drank from Kedron's brook the mist,
And morning star still lingered yet
O'er silent slopes of Olivet,

Wearied by shock of strange events,
Slept Salem's city calm and still;
When Mary, moved by grief intense
The last sad office to fulfill,
Groped through its streets her lonely way,
To seek the place where Jesus lay.

Angels at the Tomb

O loving soul ! O earnest heart !
That perils risks of city rude,
And darkness scorns of lane and mart,
To pay the debt of gratitude,
And prove her constant tenderness,
To Him who died the world to bless.

Her fervent zeal put fears to flight,
Her aching breast defied the gloom,
Her love outstripped the morning light,
As swift she sought her Master's tomb,
Bearing sweet spices in her hands,
And rich perfumes of distant lands.

But as in that dim morning gray,
She stood before the tomb alone,
Her heart was filled with sore dismay,
The body of her Lord was gone.
In sorrow keen dark shadows swept
Across her soul ; she turned and wept.

Angels at the Tomb

Then lo! she saw through flowing tears,
Two angels clothed in garments white;
The wondrous vision calmed her fears,
Their words made gloomy darkness bright;
“Whom thou seekest among the dead,
“Is not here, but risen,” they said.

In life's garden there ever stands
The new made grave, wherein are laid
In bud or bloom, as God commands,
To whom our hearts dear homage paid;
Their light is from the hearthstone fled,
We bathe their tombs in tears we shed.

But see! in shadows of each tomb,
Two angels stand in bright array,
Whispering the promise of that home,
Where shines one glad immortal day;
These seen through tears new glories wear,
Hope and Faith are the names they bear.

The Early Bluebird's Song



ONE winter's morn as down the lane I strolled,
The clouds with signs of coming storm
hung red,
A breeze swept inward from the sea, where rolled
Huge waves in garments white like sheeted dead :
The land, a picture desolate and grey,
Save tents of lingering snow that scattered lay.

As sad I mused on ways of Providence,
And problems dark concerning human fate,
Strange questionings came: shall these ills of sense,
And pains of wrong on man forever wait?
Or shall there not a long glad summer come
With fairer skies and flowers sweeter bloom?

The Early Bluebird's Song

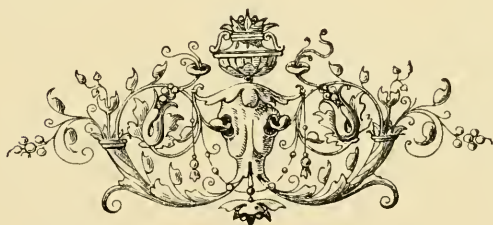
Just then from out the old orchard trees,
There broke upon mine ear, flute-like and sweet,
A song of such enchanting melodies,
I thought some angel choirister to greet.
Nor was I wrong; as out the branch it flew,
Its wings I saw, were dipped in heaven's own blue.

Thrice welcome, sweet warbler of blue-tipped wing,
Thy song bringest tidings of brighter days;
But why this sudden haste? This is not spring!
Thou dost mistake the moons! So spare thy lays:
The orchis still sleeps in its forest shade
With pink-eyed arbutus, were words I said.

Then low was I humbled when again I thought,
How this simple bird poured its prophet strain
Of summer skies, as its nature taught,
That I lifted to reason's higher plane,
Should doubt the larger hope in man instinct,
Of Heaven and earth in holy marriage linked.

The Early Bluebird's Song

This truth I learned that when I weary sighed,
And wished glad summer-time had swifter wings,
To find its coming pledged and prophesied
In that hope mine own heart so sweetly sings :
To me the task in truth and love to grow,
The years to Him who will His goodness show.



Bedtime

DAY is waning to its close,
Dusky twilight fainter grows,
Star of evening brighter glows
 Above the hills;
Shadows hide the valleys deep,
Misty ghosts o'er meadows creep,
Flowers in dewy nightcaps sleep,
 Beside the rills.

Softly falls the dark'ning gloom,
From brown fields the reapers come,
And tinkling herds seek their home,
 As daylight fades.
Lonely pipes the whippoorwill,
Hark! the echoes from the hill,
Farm and forge lie weird and still,
 Beneath the shades.

Bedtime

†

'Tis an hour of grateful calm,
Ceased grim toil and worlds alarm,
Night dim and cool pours its balm

On weary eyes.

Tread lightly pilgrims of earth,
Hushed the sounds of noisy mirth,
Day is dead that had its birth

In morning skies !

Life is but a passing day,
With its hues of morning grey,
Busy noon with fervid ray,

And eventide.

And death the calm set of sun,
When the weary day is done,
And our burdens one by one,

We lay aside.

Bedtime

When we've tasted morning sweet,
Borne the scorching midday's heat,
And dark storms have often beat
 Upon the breast ;
Glad the time of calm repose,
Freed from earthly cares and woes,
Hope's evening star gleaming shows
 A home of rest.

Teach me thou herald of night,
To welcome thy soft'ning light,
Nor fear when grows dim my sight,
 At set of sun.
But with a faith strong and deep,
In Thy arms, Lord, fall asleep,
Trusting Thee my soul to keep,
 Thy will be done.

Dedication Hymn



FROM age to age, in every clime,
Thy children, Lord, have bowed the knee
With fervent prayer and sacred hymn,
In groves and temples worshipped thee.

Another altar here we raise,
And seek thy presence as we wait,
With solemn rites and grateful praise,
These courts to Thee we consecrate.

Here may Thy truth in beauty shine,
And shed abroad its quickening rays,
Touch dying souls with life divine,
And guide their steps in heavenly ways.

Dedication Hymn

Here youth and age together meet,
Deep sorrow lay its burden down,
Earth's careworn pilgrims rest their feet,
And contrite hearts their sins disown.

Here incense bring of pure desires,
And fragrance sweet of upright deeds,
Our sacrifice, love's holy fires
That kindle at another's needs.

O Love Divine, thy people bless,
Who here shall come to praise thy name,
Each heart a shrine of righteousness,
Each day undimmed devotion's flame.

A Ship Rich Laden



ship rich laden leaves the strand,
And sails away to unknown shore,
A last adieu, a wave of hand,
Its whitened sails are seen no more;
What fleets she meets on other seas,
From fragrant isles what breezes blow,
What regions seen more fair than these,
Ah! who can tell, or who can know?

What freight she bore to that strange land?
Not jewels rare from India's mine,
Nor costly gems from Kurdistan,
Nor pearls that in deep ocean shine;

A Ship Rich Laden

Not these, but yet to me far more,
 A gentle soul of purest ray,
And heart of mine this vessel bore
 When morning gray she sailed away.

And will my ship return again,
 To bring me news of brighter lands,
Of peaceful harbors, shining main,
 Where drifts her keel o'er golden sands;
Some message sweet of fairer clime,
 Some token sure of faces dear,
Who sailed away in olden time,
 And now send back their greetings here?

In summer's calm and winter's blast,
 I've anxious watched the heaving tides,
To catch some glimpse of rising mast,
 As home again she proudly rides;

A Ship Rich Laden

But naught I see on ocean zone ;
I only hear the breakers roar,
That wildly dash in plaintive moan,
Then die in silence on the shore.

So long I've gazed my locks are white,
And weary eyes oft fill with tears,
While day is fading into night ;
But midst this gloom of doubts and fears,
O vision sweet ! hope's beacon throws
A wondrous glory o'er that sea,
And in its light a dear face glows,
A snow-white hand is beckoning me.



O Lord, How Long



OW long, O Lord, to that glad time,
When nations shall thy glory see,
When anthems sung in notes sublime
Shall sound redemption's jubilee?

Why thy chariot wheels so slow,
To smite the sin, to crush the wrong,
To save the bleeding heart from woe,
To lift the burdens borne so long?

Why wait the seeds that saints have sown,
And moistened with their blood and tears,
So long before the blade is grown,
And fields are crowned with whitened ears?

O Lord, How Long

Oh, why does justice calmly sleep,
Its sword in scabbard dim with rust,
While wicked men their orgies keep,
To tempt their race to drunken lust ?

Hearst thou not the anguish cry,
That comes from many a wretched home,
Starved childrens' moan, the mothers' sigh,
The fearful wail of the drunkard's doom ?

Seest thou not the thousands slain,
Sad wrecks along time's fleeting strand,
Perished to swell the dramshop's gain,
Slain by the keeper's blood-red hand ?

And shall these crimes forever last,
Fill with their woes this earth so fair,
Its homes destroyed by the wasting blast
With precious hopes once garnered there ?

O Lord, How Long

Forbid, O Lord, but in thy wrath
Arise and smite this curse and sin,
For Christ's coming make clean a path,
And bring his holy kingdom in.

Let not thy judgment long delay,
Strike, and avenge thy children's cries,
Hasten, Lord, the glorious day,
And bless with joy our waiting eyes!



The Inward Vision



THINGS are we do not see,
But sure it is that he,
Who would see all things best,
Must have eyes holiest.

Sad the blind on whose sight
Lingers the long dark night ;
More pitiful his lot
Who with eyes seeth not.

Each makes the world he sees,
In space or centuries ;
One to dull clown it seems,
Other in prophet's dreams.

The Inward Vision

'Tis spirit colors all,
Paints Nature great or small,
Robes skies in blue or gray,
Brings dark or sunny day,

Makes our heaven and our hell,
Our deities as well,
Since the gods creeds impart,
But pictures are of heart.

As fine or gross the sense,
So is sight's recompense,
And whether ill or fair,
Is what we mortals are.

As shores of bush and brake,
Reflected are in lake ;
So world in parts or whole,
Are mirrored of the soul.

The Inward Vision

No beauty outward seen,
Till first it dwells within ;
No God of love confessed,
Till love pervade the breast.

To make the vision bright,
Fill soul with love and light;
Who has the most of these,
Both God and Nature sees.



Content



N waters deep, dear Lord, I'm tossed,
These ocean bounds I cannot see,
'Tis in thy greatness I am lost,
While so much beauty dazzles me.

Plain, simple things I try to learn,
But this excess of glory bright,
That fills creation from thy throne,
But blinds and mocks my feeble sight.

Why search out God to understand?
Why sound a vast and shoreless sea?
The things I find so close at hand,
Best shape and build my destiny.

Content

Though questions all I cannot solve,
Or clearly grasp such mystery,
One thing I'm sure, that God is love,
And that is full enough for me.

With this sweet thought let calm content,
Abide forever in my breast,
His ways though dark in love are meant,
And what He does is always best.



The Sun : Brown Maid

A sprig of fern before me lies,
And on the air its odors fling,
Which, seen with dull or careless eyes,
May seem a small and trifling thing;
But deeper thought it wakes in me,
A wondrous vision of the mind,
In which with eye of memory,
I new and sweeter meanings find.

With magic spell this simple fern,
Shames necromantic arts of old ;
I look : the wheels of nature turn,
And circling years are backward rolled ;
Life's early scenes in beauty glow ;
Before me rise the woods and plain,
Where oft I roamed long years ago,
And sober age grows young again.

The Sun-Brown Maid

I see the meadow robed in green,
The pasture where I drove the cows,
The sloping banks and brook between,
And fragrance breathe of hemlock boughs ;
While on the air there lingers sweet,
The music soft of tinkling bell,
The lonely thrush his songs repeat,
And echoes wake in woodland dell.

I hear the laughter on the hills,
Where merry children berries seek,
And heart again with rapture thrills,
At sight of one with sun-tanned cheek,
And smiles brimful of roguish glee,
That hide and seek with blushes play
O'er her face ; lips, that wandering bee
In search of sweet, might tempt astray.

The Sun-Brown Maid

I show her where June lilies grow,
Where sprouts the spicy sassafras,
Golden cinquefoil and asters blow,
The woodchuck's castle in the grass;
And while we sit beneath the pines,
And chainlets make of tender leaves,
Which on her hat of straw she binds,
Ties stronger round my heart she weaves.

I told my love by word and sign,
She blushed; then pouted, half in fun,
But when she turned her lips to mine,
Ah! then I knew her heart was won;
So thrilled with fervant ecstasies.
We lost all sense of time and shade,
And wondered why the flying days
Were not for lovers longer made.

The Sun-Brown Maid

O vision sweet of sunny days,
That floats so clear in mem'ries light,
When on this forest herb I gaze,
Yet like some transient dream of night;
I turn, alas! how changed the scene,
Since that glad time by hillside wood ;
How many silent graves between ?
How many milestones on the road ?

The hills the same, the brook runs on,
Lilies still show their pearl and gold,
But changes come with every sun,
Since lovers met by shady wold ;
The barefoot boy white-haired has grown,
And many a year has gently shed
Its dews, where sleeps beneath the stone,
His early love, the sun-brown maid.

Uncertainty



THOUGH skies at morn in beauty glow,
With signs of sunny day complete,
Yet who can tell what noon may show,
What clouds may come, what storms may beat,
To change the day that seemed so fair,
From promise bright to dark despair?

The flower we plant with fondest care,
And watch its growth with fresh delight,
Whose leaves breathe out a fragrance rare,
With brightest tints to charm the sight,
Ere night is withered by the frost,
The first among our treasures lost!

Uncertainty

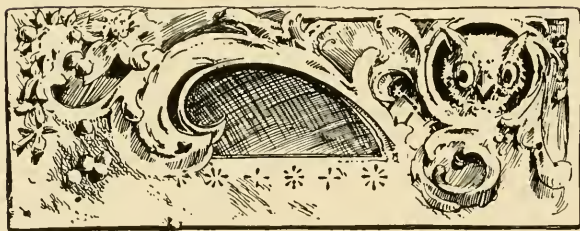
The star we love oft proves a gleam
Of some uncertain meteor bright,
Our dearest hope a midnight dream,
That fades away ere morning light;
Today how calm our sea is shown,
Tomorrow what sad wrecks are strown !

Of good or ill in life's brief day,
We know not what an hour may bring,
But blindly grope our feeble way,
And in our doubts and darkness cling
In trust to Him who sparrow guides,
And on the stormy whirlwind rides.

Tis well we cannot lift the veil,
That kindly hides our future fate,
Or else how oft our hearts would fail,
And solemn tasks neglected wait ;
Far better blindness than to see
The portents of sad destiny.

Uncertainty

One faith alone can wipe our tears,
And to our hearts sweet comfort bring,
That sometime in immortal years,
From all these ills will gladness spring;
Some joy will grow from every pain,
And not a tear be shed in vain!





*"The last lingering beam of light is gone,
And dusky gloom the solemn landscape fills."*

The Sunset Hour



LOW dips the golden rim of setting sun,
Till down behind the purple tinted hills,
The last lingering beam of light is gone,
And dusky gloom the solemn landscape fills.

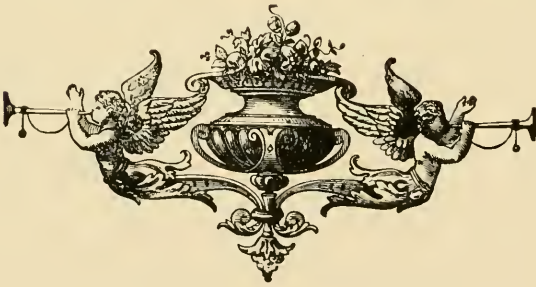
The sounds of noisy care and busy gain
Are hushed; save notes of tinkling bells are heard,
And farmboy's shout far down the grassy lane,
The cricket's song or screech of startled bird,

The tired traveller near his journey's end,
Sees glimmering lights across the distant plain;
Thither with joy his quickened footsteps bend,
For soon he hopes to meet dear ones again.

The Sunset Hour

O blest, indeed, who in life's sunset hour,
Can through gathering shadows plain discern,
Some gleaming lights beyond this darkened shore
Some glimpse of home in an immortal bourne.

With hope new kindled he pursues his way,
That grows still brighter as he nears his goal,
Till fades dim earthly light to heavenly day,
Loved meet again and soul communes with soul.







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